



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730

Ser N1/ 114056

3 Aug 18

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)

To: (b) (6), USN

Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING AND LONG SLEEVES

Ref: (a) Your ltr of 7 Mar 18

(b) NAVPERS 15665I United States Navy Uniform Regulations

(c) OPNAV(N097) memo Ser N097/18U-146125

(d) DoD Instruction 1300.17

(e) SECNAVINST 1730.8B

(f) ASN(M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13

Encl: (1) Hijab (Khimar) Manner of Wear

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (f), your request to waive the requirements in Article 6405.7 of reference (b) for full-time wear of a head covering while in uniform is approved. Your request to wear long sleeves in uniform may be accommodated by your Commanding Officer (CO) as specified in paragraph three below, and in line with reference (b).

2. In making this decision, I reviewed your request, references (a) and (b), including the endorsement by your CO, recommendation from your local chaplain, and a memorandum from the Chief of Chaplains in reference (c).

3. In line with references (d) through (f), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation. As permitted by reference (e), I find that this accommodation is the least restrictive means of accommodating your request while maintaining the Navy's overriding interest in mission accomplishment. You may wear your hijab in line with enclosure (1), or unless reference (b) is changed to reflect a different manner of wear with your uniform. Upon a change in mission, duty, or environment, and with a compelling Government interest, your CO may request that you temporarily remove your hijab. At that time, you must revert to the appropriate uniform of the day. Pursuant to references (d) and (e), you must again request approval when you report to a new command. Reference (b) authorizes you to wear optional outer garments in Service Uniform, optional long sleeve shirt and pants in Navy Physical Training Uniform, and sleeves down throughout the year in Navy Working Uniform Types I or III. Service and Dinner Dress uniforms are designed to provide maximum coverage when worn. Without modifying current uniform regulations, your CO may adjust your uniform of the day, or adjust your authorized organizational clothing in line with Chapter 6 of reference (b).

4. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. The Navy has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military

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Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
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readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety, on both the individual and unit levels.

5. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.



R. P. BURKE

Copy to:
OPNAV (N097, N131)
BUMED
CNRSE
NAVMED WEST

Hijab (Khimar) Manner of Wear

(1) A Sailor with an approved religious accommodation exception to policy may wear a one or two-piece hijab (khimar) made of a matte material that is black or navy blue in color. The material will be free of designs or markings, except that a Sailor wearing a camouflage uniform may wear a hijab in a camouflage pattern matching the uniform. The hijab will not be worn in hazardous or safety intensive environments including those that may require special clothing, to include fire resistant/retardant fabrics or materials.

(2) The hijab will be worn in a manner that presents a professional and well-groomed appearance. When worn, the hijab must be closely fitted to the contours of the head and face without exposure of the ears. The hijab may not cover the forehead, eyes, cheeks, nose, mouth, or chin. The bottom edges of the hijab will be tucked under the Sailor's uniform top and over the under garment so as not to interfere with the proper wear and display of the uniform being worn (i.e., no bulging, protruding or distortion of uniform blouses, shirts, jumpers, jackets or coats).

(3) The wearing of the hijab will not interfere with the proper wearing of all Navy covers nor interfere with the ability to perform all assigned duties. Hairstyles worn underneath the hijab will conform to Navy grooming standards for authorized hairstyles and support the proper wear of Navy headgear. All Navy grooming standards and requirements will be maintained while wearing the hijab.





DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114058
13 Aug 18

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education)
(N1)

To: (b) (6), USN

Via: Commanding Officer, Recruit Training Command

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

Ref: (a) Your ltr of 4 Jun 18
(b) NAVPERS 15665I United States Navy Uniform Regulations
(c) OPNAV(N097) memo Ser N097/18U-146135 of 27 Jul 18
(d) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(e) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(f) ASN(M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13

Encl: (1) Turban Manner of Wear

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (f), your request to waive the requirements in Article 6405.7 of reference (b) for full-time wear of a head covering while in uniform is granted with the following limitations: your head covering may only be worn in transit to and from as well as during religious ceremonies, and full-time wear will be authorized following the Sailor capping ceremony while you are assigned to Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes.

2. In making this decision, I reviewed your request, reference (a), including the endorsements by your commanding officer (CO), the endorsements from your chain of command, and the recommendation from your local chaplain. In addition, I reviewed a memorandum from the Chief of Chaplains, reference (c).

3. In line with references (d) through (f), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation. As permitted by reference (e), I find that this accommodation is the least restrictive means of accommodating your request while maintaining the Navy's overriding interest in mission accomplishment. You may wear your turban in accordance with enclosure (1), or unless reference (b) is changed to reflect a different manner of wear with your uniform. Upon a change in mission, duty, or environment, and with a compelling Government interest, your CO may request that you temporarily remove your turban. At that time, you must revert to the appropriate uniform of

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Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

the day. Pursuant to references (d) and (e), you must again request approval when you report to a new command.

4. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. The Navy has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety, on both the individual and unit levels. That compelling interest in unit cohesion and operational safety is of paramount importance during Service accession and indoctrination training, which is unique to the military. The operationally-focused training and "Sailorization" that occurs at Recruit Training Command Great Lakes make that location an operational environment. In a relatively short eight-week period, Recruit Training Command boot camp transforms civilians from all different backgrounds into Sailors in the United States Navy. In order to accomplish this critical operational mission, each day consists of structured, intense training. Nearly all of this training involves physical activity, machines, equipment, and actual or simulated operational scenarios that realistically mimic the environment within which Sailors operate at sea. These activities include firefighting and damage control scenarios, line handling, and other work around machinery, among other things. As such, danger to self and others is exacerbated when deviations from the prescribed clothing occur in this operational environment. Additionally, the uniformity of the appearance of all Recruits is a critical component to this training for a number of reasons. Detailed instructions are issued to the Recruits each morning specifying exactly which uniform items may be worn and the manner in which they may be worn. In doing this, every Recruit is taught how to wear a uniform item in a uniform manner (i.e., sleeves rolled or unrolled, shoes laced correctly, etc.). All aspects of Recruit Training Command training instill these fundamental military principles into all Recruits. Uniformity of appearance is commensurate with the military principles of service above self, of the military unit above the individual, and of the importance of teamwork. For many, the vigilant focus on even the smallest details begins with their uniforms and gives them an indication of exacting standards that will be expected of them because they choose to don the uniform of a United States Navy Sailor.

5. Recruits participate in everything from firefighting to battle stations, all of which require dedicated teamwork during their time at Recruit Training Command. Teamwork and cohesion are cultivated through participation in rigorous operational events and through uniformity of appearance. Ensuring a strict adherence to rules and regulations is also necessary to develop the good order and discipline demanded of every Sailor. In this unique operational environment, any deviation from uniformity of appearance, even for a religious purpose, will elevate the individual above the service, the unit, and the team, and have the negative effect of undermining the very principles which Recruit Training Command training seeks to instill in all Recruits. Deviating from uniformity also undermines the good order and discipline required of all Recruits in this unique training environment because of

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

the potential to isolate the individual and erode the cohesion and camaraderie built with fellow recruits.

6. You must understand that the Recruit Training experience is a short, unique time in your Navy career. The United States Navy embraces diversity, and supports religious freedom. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable, temporary restrictions in order to ensure mission accomplishment. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. As such, you will find that accommodations such as these can be made with far fewer restrictions outside of your current, unique, once-in-a-career training or other actual operational environments.

7. I wish you the best in your Navy career.



R. P. BURKE

Copy to:
OPNAV (N097, N131)
NETC
NSTC

Turban Manner of Wear

Upon determination of approval of subject religious accommodation request for the wearing of religious headwear in uniform, the following are guidelines for wear of the female Sikh Turban while in uniform:

- a. Turbans must be black or navy blue in color and will not hide or obstruct a clear view of the face from the front or sides. The fabric should be of matte fabric and contain no designs, glitter, or lace.
- b. Hair will be wrapped in a head scarf underneath the turban to ensure it remains securely in place.
- c. The turban when worn will not extend below the upper area of the forehead and will prevent hair from being visible. Ears may or may not be visible at the wearer's discretion.
- d. Wearing of the turban must facilitate the proper wearing of all Navy uniform headgear and safety/mission required headgear.



Uncovered



Covered Working Uniform



Covered Service Uniform



Covered Dress Uniform



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114102
26 Sep 18

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/0123 of 8 Mar 16
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) BUPERSINST 1000.22
(f) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(g) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for facial hair is approved.
2. In making this decision, I reviewed the documents in reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).
3. In line with references (d) through (f), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation. As permitted by reference (d), I find that this accommodation is the least restrictive means of accommodating your request while maintaining the Navy's overriding interest in mission accomplishment. You may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in reference (e). That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. The beard must not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured to any style. You will only maintain your beard while performing non-operational duties, including non-operational training, as a (b) (6) assigned to (b) (6). Upon a change in mission, duty, or environment, and with a compelling government interest, your Commanding Officer may request that you temporarily shave your beard. At that time, you must revert to the standard set forth in Article 2201.2 of reference (a). Pursuant to references (d) and (f), you must again request approval when you report to a new command.
4. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. The Navy has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety, on both the individual and unit levels.

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

5. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.



R. P. BURKE

Copy to:
CNRC
NETC

The following two (2)
response letters both
pertain to the same
original request.



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114101
26 Sep 18

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USNR
Via: Commanding Officer, Recruit Training Command

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) Memorandum of 13 Jun 18 submitted on your behalf
(b) NAVPERS 15565I
(c) OPNAV (N097) memo 1730 Ser N097/18U-146150 of 22 Aug 18
(d) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/0123 of 8 Mar 16
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17
(f) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(g) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(h) BUPERSINST 1000.22B

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (b) for facial hair is partially approved.
2. In making this decision, I reviewed the documents in reference (a), including the endorsement by your Commanding Officer. In addition, I reviewed the memorandum from the Chief of Chaplains, reference (c), and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (d).
3. In line with references (e) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation. As permitted by reference (f), I find that this accommodation is the least restrictive means of accommodating your request while maintaining the Navy's overriding interest in mission accomplishment. You may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in reference (h). That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. The beard must not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured to any style. You will only maintain your beard while performing non-operational duties, including non-operational training, after the Sailorization process and capping ceremony at Recruit Training Command (RTC), and while attached to your follow-on initial (b) (6) training pipeline in (b) (6), providing you continue progressing through training and are assigned there. Upon a change in mission, duty, or environment, and with a compelling government interest, your Commanding Officer may request that you temporarily shave your beard. At that time you must revert to the standard set forth in Article 2201.2 of reference (b). Pursuant to references (e) and (f), you must again request approval when you report to a new command.
4. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. The Navy has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
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readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety, on both the individual and unit levels.

5. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.



R. P. BURKE

Copy to:
N097
CHBUMED



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N00/18U100091
14 Nov 18

From: Chief of Naval Operations

To: (b) (6) U.S. Navy

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION IN THE CASE OF (b) (6)
(b) (6), U.S. NAVY

Ref: (a) DCNO (N1) ltr 1730 Ser N1/114101 of 26 Sep 18
(b) (b) (6) ltr of 28 Sep 18
(c) (b) (6) email ltr of 28 Sep 18
(d) (b) (6) ltr of 9 Oct 18
(e) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(f) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(g) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(h) NAVPERS 15565I
(i) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser00/013 of 22 Oct 18

1. Your appeal of reference (a), as stated by your attorney in references (b) and (c), is granted in part and denied in part.
2. I considered your original request, your appeal, and the endorsements of your correspondence. Per reference (d), I note that you separated from the Naval service under favorable conditions and that you requested I treat your appeal as a pre-accession request for religious accommodation for the purpose of reenlistment.
3. References (e) through (g) designate me as the final appeal authority for religious accommodation requests. As permitted by reference (g), I find that granting your request in full would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including (1) your safety and the safety of other Sailors; and (2) the military readiness of you and your unit. I further find there is no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.
4. You may wear a beard not to exceed 1/2 inch in length. The beard may not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured to any style. You will only maintain your beard while performing non-operational duties, including non-operational training, after you have completed the capping ceremony at Recruit Training Command and while attached to your follow-on initial (b) (6) training, provided you successfully complete recruit training and are assigned to (b) (6) training. Upon a change in mission, duty, or environment, or any other demonstrable change in circumstances that affects a compelling government interest, your future Commanding Officers may request that you temporarily shave your beard. At that time, you must follow the standard set forth in reference (h).

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION IN THE CASE OF (b) (6)
[REDACTED], U.S. NAVY

5. During recruit training, your request to wear a beard is denied. This includes your entry into initial training through the Recruit Training Command capping ceremony. The safety and military readiness of Sailors is of paramount importance to the Navy. To that end, Recruit Training Command is responsible for the initial training of every recruit, and in an eight-week period rapidly acclimates newly inducted recruits to the rigor and challenges of shipboard life. This process of "Sailorization" includes training on the proper, effective procedure for wearing and using emergency breathing apparatuses. A complete understanding of how to use this equipment is essential to your personal safety and individual readiness, as well as the safety of all Sailors who could depend upon you during an actual at-sea casualty. In accordance with reference (i), I recognize that facial hair interferes with the proper seal of all current Navy breathing apparatuses and significantly increases risk to the individual, his or her shipmates, the unit, and the mission. Given the intense, condensed training period for such a critical skill, any accommodation that compromises realistic training introduces an unacceptable level of risk to the Navy's compelling interests in safety and readiness.

6. The Navy is a community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society and at times may require you to place your ship and your shipmates ahead of yourself. Based upon the information contained in your request, your appeal, the endorsements to this correspondence, and my over 36 years of service as a Navy officer, I find that when one person in a military unit is granted an exception to regulations, there can be a significant adverse effect upon the other members of that unit. When exceptions are granted—regardless of the reason or purpose—subordinate military members often show less willingness to comply with command rules and regulations, which results in increased disciplinary problems and a lack of unit cohesion. This resulting degradation of good order and discipline is particularly aggravated in a recruit training environment where members live and work together in close quarters while they acclimate to the Navy.

7. After carefully reviewing your request, your appeal, the endorsements of the correspondence, reference (i), and my experience, I determine that approval of your appeal in full will adversely affect the Navy's ability to accomplish its mission, a compelling government interest. I find that the partial grant of your accommodation request as detailed in reference (a) and paragraphs (4) and (5) above, is the least restrictive means of accommodating your request while maintaining the Navy's compelling government interest. You have my sincere best wishes for your success as you decide whether or not to seek reenlistment and continue serving as a U.S. Navy Sailor.



J. M. RICHARDSON

Copy to:
ASN (M&RA)
DCNO (N1)
OPNAV (N097)
RTC Great Lakes



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114103
5 Oct 18

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USNR
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING AND LONG SLEEVES

Ref: (a) Your ltr of 23 Jul 18
(b) NAVPERS 15665I United States Navy Uniform Regulations
(c) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) ASN(M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13

Encl: (1) Hijab (Khimar) Manner of Wear

1. In line with references (a) through (e), your request to waive the requirements in Article 6405.7 of reference (b) for full-time wear of a head covering while in uniform is approved. Your request to cover your extremities in uniform may be accommodated by your commanding officer (CO) as specified in paragraph 3, and in line with reference (b).

2. In making this decision, I reviewed your request, reference (a), including the endorsement by your CO and recommendation from your local chaplain.

3. In line with references (c) through (e), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation. As permitted by reference (d), I find that this accommodation is the least restrictive means of accommodating your request while maintaining the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment. You may wear your hijab in line with enclosure (1), or unless reference (b) is changed to reflect a different manner of wear with your uniform. Upon a change in mission, duty or environment and with a compelling Government interest, your CO may request that you temporarily remove your hijab. At that time, you must revert to the appropriate uniform of the day. Pursuant to references (c) and (d), you must again request approval when you report to a new command. Reference (b) authorizes you to wear optional outer garments in Service Uniform, optional long sleeve shirt and pants in Navy Physical Training Uniform and sleeves down throughout the year in Navy Working Uniform Types I or III. Service and Dinner Dress uniforms are designed to provide maximum coverage when worn. Without modifying current uniform regulations, your CO may adjust your uniform of the day, or adjust your authorized organizational clothing in line with chapter 6 of reference (b) to accommodate your religious practice to cover your extremities.

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readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety, on both the individual and unit levels.

5. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.



R. P. BURKE

Copy to:
OCNR
CNRMA

Hijab (Khimar) Manner of Wear

(1) A Sailor with an approved religious accommodation exception to policy may wear a one or two-piece hijab (khimar) made of a matte material that is black or navy blue in color. The material will be free of designs or markings, except that a Sailor wearing a camouflage uniform may wear a hijab in a camouflage pattern matching the uniform. The hijab will not be worn in hazardous or safety intensive environments including those that may require special clothing, to include fire resistant/retardant fabrics or materials.

(2) The hijab will be worn in a manner that presents a professional and well-groomed appearance. When worn, the hijab must be closely fitted to the contours of the head and face without exposure of the ears. The hijab may not cover the forehead, eyes, cheeks, nose, mouth or chin. The bottom edges of the hijab will be tucked under the Sailor's uniform top and over the under garment so as not to interfere with the proper wear and display of the uniform being worn (i.e., no bulging, protruding or distortion of uniform blouses, shirts, jumpers, jackets or coats).

(3) The wearing of the hijab will not interfere with the proper wearing of all Navy covers nor interfere with the ability to perform all assigned duties. Hairstyles worn underneath the hijab will conform to Navy grooming standards for authorized hairstyles and support the proper wear of Navy headgear. All Navy grooming standards and requirements will be maintained while wearing the hijab.





DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114106
9 Oct 18

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 6 Jul 18
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/0123 of 8 Mar 16
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) BUPERSINST 1000.22
(f) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(g) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for facial hair is partially approved.
2. In making this decision, I reviewed the documents in reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).
3. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation. As permitted by reference (d), I find that this accommodation is the least restrictive means of accommodating your request while maintaining the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment. You may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in reference (e). That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. The beard must not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured to any style. You will only maintain your beard while performing non-operational duties, including non-operational training, while attached to Naval Station Norfolk. Upon a change in mission, duty or environment, and with a compelling government interest, your Commanding Officer may request that you temporarily shave your beard. At that time, you must revert to the standard set forth in Article 2201.2 of reference (a). Pursuant to references (d) and (f), you must again request approval when you report to a new command.
4. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. The importance of putting your ship and your shipmates ahead of yourself is of particular significance in the Navy. A waiver of Navy's Uniform Regulations would have a detrimental effect on your military readiness, that of your unit and the safety of you and those who serve beside you. In line with reference (g), facial hair interferes with the proper seal of all current Navy breathing apparatuses and can significantly increase risk to the individual. The

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Navy has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety, on both the individual and unit levels.

5. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.



R. P. BURKE

Copy to:
CNRMA



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114107
9 Oct 18

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: [REDACTED] (b) [REDACTED], USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6) [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 15 Aug 18
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/0123 of 8 Mar 16
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) BUPERSINST 1000.22
(f) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(g) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for facial hair is approved.
2. In making this decision, I reviewed the documents in reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).
3. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation. As permitted by reference (d), I find that this accommodation is the least restrictive means of accommodating your request while maintaining the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment. You may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in reference (e). That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. The beard must not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured to any style. You will only maintain your beard while performing non-operational duties, including non-operational training, while attached to (b) (6) [REDACTED]. Upon a change in mission, duty, or environment, and with a compelling government interest, your Commanding Officer may request that you temporarily shave your beard. At that time, you must revert to the standard set forth in Article 2201.2 of reference (a). Pursuant to references (d) and (f), you must again request approval when you report to a new command.
4. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. The Navy has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety, on both the individual and unit levels.

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

5. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.



R. P. BURKE

Copy to:
NETC



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114105
9 Oct 18

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 17 Aug 18
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/0123 of 8 Mar 16
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) BUPERSINST 1000.22
(f) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(g) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for facial hair is approved.
2. In making this decision, I reviewed the documents in reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).
3. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation. As permitted by reference (d), I find that this accommodation is the least restrictive means of accommodating your request while maintaining the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment. You may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in reference (e). That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. The beard must not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured to any style. You will only maintain your beard while performing non-operational duties, including non-operational training, while attached to (b) (6). Upon a change in mission, duty, or environment, and with a compelling government interest, your Commanding Officer may request that you temporarily shave your beard. At that time, you must revert to the standard set forth in Article 2201.2 of reference (a). Pursuant to references (d) and (f), you must again request approval when you report to a new command.
4. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. The Navy has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety, on both the individual and unit levels.

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

5. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.


R. P. BURKE

Copy to:
NETC



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114109
15 Oct 18

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: [REDACTED], USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6) [REDACTED]

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 16 Aug 18
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/0123 of 8 Mar 16
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for facial hair is denied.
2. In making this decision, I reviewed the documents in reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command. In addition, I reviewed the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c). In line with references (d) through (f), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (g), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion, and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (g) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors: (1) impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety, (2) religious importance of the request, (3) cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests, (4) whether there are alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation and (5) how other such requests have been treated.

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

6. A complete ban on a visible religious apparel may be appropriate under circumstances in which the Sailor's duties, the military mission, or the maintenance of discipline require absolutely uniformity, such as participating in formation, parades, honor or color guards, and similar ceremonial functions. Similarly, strict adherence to Navy standards is an essential aspect of the Navy's recruiting mission because recruiters are a public reaffirmation of the Navy's Core Values and to baseline standards. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. Based on my 35 years of service and my experience overseeing the Navy's recruiting mission, I believe that the Navy has a compelling interest in ensuring that prospective Sailors and officers are presented with a very clear understanding of the culture they seek to join. As such, the conduct and military bearing of recruiters must clearly reflect the Navy's standards and values. To do otherwise risks diluting the importance of adherence to standards. It is for this reason that recruiters are selected and screened from amongst the Navy's best. Although accommodations such as the one you seek are possible in other settings, I find that denial is the least restrictive means available to maintain the image of the Navy which all production recruiters are charged with maintaining.

7. Per reference (d) and (f), you may route another request for religious accommodation if you subsequently experience a change in, mission, command, duty or environment.



R. P. BURKE

Copy to:
CNRC
NETC



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114112
17 Oct 18

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I (Navy Uniform Regulations)
(b) Your ltr of 11 Sep 18
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/0123 of 8 Mar 16
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) BUPERSINST 1000.22
(f) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(g) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for facial hair is approved.

2. In making this decision, I reviewed the documents in reference (b), including the endorsement by your Commanding Officer, and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

3. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation. As permitted by reference (d) and understanding the nature of your duties at (b) (6), I find that limiting your wear of a beard to shore and in port only is the least restrictive means available to meet the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment including safety. You may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in reference (e) during your current duties on shore or while onboard a naval vessel in port. That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. The beard must not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured to any style. However, some of your training duties will occur in an underway operational environment where your accommodation cannot be supported. While underway, damage control is the responsibility of all Navy personnel onboard. In line with reference (c), even one day's growth can be detrimental to a proper face seal and significantly increase risk to an individual. For your safety and the safety of the crew, when you are assigned duties onboard a naval vessel underway, you must conform to normal grooming standards and must temporarily shave your beard. Additionally, at any time and with a similarly compelling government interest, your Commanding Officer may direct that you temporarily shave your beard.

4. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. The Navy has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety, on both the individual and unit levels.

5. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.



R. F. BURKE

Copy to:
CNRSW



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114116
19 Nov 18

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 14 Jun 18
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/013 of 22 Oct 18
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201 of reference (a) for a beard and long hair (to include dreadlocks) is denied.
2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion, and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:
 - a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety,

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

- b. religious importance of the request,
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests,
- d. whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation and
- e. how other such requests have been treated.

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard in excess of what is currently allowed by your "no-shave" medical waiver, reference (c) reported that the longer a beard the greater the impact is to the safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. While underway, damage control (DC) is the responsibility of each crew member. Additionally, as an (b) (6) working on aircraft and conducting operations on a flight line, your duties, training or emergencies may require you to don a respirator, gas or oxygen mask. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury and death. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. With regard to your request to grow out your hair in dreadlocks, I have observed that when one person in a military unit is given a special privilege (such as a male wearing a noticeably distinct hairstyle contrary to male grooming standards), there is a significant adverse impact upon the other members of that unit who question why the command is giving special preferences to some members and not others. This applies even in cases like yours where a genuinely held belief is involved. This situation degrades the desire of subordinate military members to comply with command rules and regulations and results in an increase in disciplinary problems. The resulting degradation of good order and discipline is particularly aggravated in commands where members are in close quarters such as a shipboard berthing. In an operational environment, this impact on discipline can have significant adverse consequences. Uniformity, whether in application of standard operating procedures or grooming standards, is essential to good order, discipline, and esprit de corps, which are necessary pre-conditions to mission accomplishment.

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

c. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.



R. P. BURKE



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114000
30 Jan 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 4 Sep 18
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/013 of 22 Oct 18
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17
(j) BUPERSINST 1000.22B

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201 of reference (a) for a 1-inch beard is partially approved. You may wear a beard not to exceed 1/4 inch in length.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:


Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety,
- b. religious importance of the request,
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests,
- d. whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation and
- e. how other such requests have been treated.

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.

a. As permitted by reference (d), I find that this accommodation is the least restrictive means of accommodating your request while maintaining the Navy's overriding interest in mission accomplishment. You may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in references (a) and (j). That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. The beard must not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured to any style. You will only maintain your beard while performing non-operational duties, including non-operational training. Upon a change in mission, duty or environment, and with a compelling government interest, your commanding officer may request that you temporarily shave your beard. At that time, you must revert to the standard set forth in Article 2201.2 of reference (a). Pursuant to references (d), (e) and (g), you must again request approval when you report to a new command.

b. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c). Uniformity, whether in application of standard operating procedures or grooming standards, is essential to good order, discipline and esprit de corps, which are necessary pre-conditions to mission accomplishment. For the same reasons, there is a need for standards and uniformity among the accommodations for religious beards. Article 2201.2 of reference (a) and reference (g) articulate these standards. In accordance with reference (g), you are authorized to wear a beard not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.


R. P. BURKE

Copy to:
ONI WASHINGTON DC



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114001
30 Jan 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 20 Nov 18
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/013 of 22 Oct 18
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17
(j) BUPERSINST 1000.22B

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201 of reference (a) for facial hair is approved. You may wear a beard not to exceed 1/4 inch in length.
2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety,
- b. religious importance of the request,
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests,
- d. whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation and
- e. how other such requests have been treated.

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.

a. As permitted by reference (d), I find that this accommodation is the least restrictive means of accommodating your request while maintaining the Navy's overriding interest in mission accomplishment. You may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in references (a) and (j). That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. The beard must not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured to any style. You will only maintain your beard while performing non-operational duties, including non-operational training. Upon a change in mission, duty or environment, and with a compelling government interest, your commanding officer may request that you temporarily shave your beard. At that time, you must revert to the standard set forth in Article 2201.2 of reference (a). Pursuant to references (d), (e) and (g), you must again request approval when you report to a new command.

b. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c). Uniformity, whether in application of standard operating procedures or grooming standards, is essential to good order, discipline and esprit de corps, which are necessary pre-conditions to mission accomplishment. For the same reasons, there is a need for standards and uniformity among accommodations for religious beards. Article 2201.2 of reference (a) and reference (g) articulate these standards. Accordingly, you are authorized to wear a beard not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.


R. P. BURKE



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114002
30 Jan 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 26 Nov 18
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/013 of 22 Oct 18
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17
(j) BUPERSINST 1000.22B

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201 of reference (a) for a 3-inch beard is partially approved. You may wear a beard not to exceed 1/4 inch in length.
2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety,
- b. religious importance of the request,
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests,
- d. whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation and
- e. how other such requests have been treated.

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.

a. As permitted by reference (d), I find that this accommodation is the least restrictive means of accommodating your request while maintaining the Navy's overriding interest in mission accomplishment. You may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in references (a) and (j). That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. The beard must not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured to any style. You will only maintain your beard while performing non-operational duties, including non-operational training. Upon a change in mission, duty or environment, and with a compelling government interest, your commanding officer may request that you temporarily shave your beard. At that time, you must revert to the standard set forth in Article 2201.2 of reference (a). Pursuant to references (d), (e) and (g), you must again request approval when you report to a new command.

b. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c). Uniformity, whether in application of standard operating procedures or grooming standards, is essential to good order, discipline and esprit de corps, which are necessary pre-conditions to mission accomplishment. For the same reasons, there is a need for standards and uniformity among the accommodations for religious beards. Article 2201.2 of reference (a) and reference (g) articulate these standards. In line with reference (g), you are authorized to wear a beard not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.


R. P. BURKE

Copy to:
NAVREG SW RCC



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114010
7 Mar 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS AND UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD
COVERING

Ref: (a) Your ltr of 9 Dec 18
(b) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 20 February 2018
(c) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(d) ASN(M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(e) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(f) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(g) MILPERSMAN 6320-010
(h) NAVPERS 15665I
(i) CHBUMED ltr 6320 Ser M3/19UM32605 of 11 Jan 19
(j) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (h), your request for religious accommodation through waiver of immunization requirements is disapproved, except for available Chief of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED) approved alternative immunizations. Your request for religious accommodation through waiver of uniform standards to wear a hijab in Navy uniforms is approved in line with reference (h) chapter 6, section 4, article 6405. However, you are required to remove your hijab to don appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) or as required in line with reference (e).

2. In line with references (b) through (e), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (f), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (b) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (j) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS AND UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (b) and (c), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety
- b. religious importance of the request
- c. means cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there are alternatives available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. how other such requests have been treated

5. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (a), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the advice of BUMED in reference (i).

a. A waiver of immunizations containing animal gelatin would have a predictable and detrimental effect on the readiness for you and for the Sailors that serve alongside you. Exemption from vaccination would negatively impact the protection of the deployed population. BUMED indicates that due to your operational setting and deployment area, exemption from vaccinations such as yellow fever, varicella and measles, mumps and rubella is not recommended even though no alternative formulation exists. Granting your request will have a direct and foreseeable negative impact on the compelling government's interests of military readiness and health of the force.

b. You are currently assigned to (b) (6) and will inevitably be expected to live and work in close proximity with your shipmates on deployment. I find that disapproval of your request for a waiver of immunization requirements is the least restrictive means available to preserve the Department of Defense's compelling interest in military readiness, mission accomplishment and the health of military Service members.

c. As stated by your commanding officer, the senior medical officer is to make every possible effort to obtain alternative vaccinations, but in the case that no alternative exists, you are still to receive the required vaccinations.

d. Granting your request to wear a religious head covering in all Navy uniforms is the least restrictive means to support your request. You may wear your hijab as requested, but you are required to remove it to don PPE or as required in line with reference (e).

6. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS AND UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD
COVERING

greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how they affect the Navy mission as a whole.

7. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.



R. P. BURKE

Copy to:
OPNAV (N097, N131)
BUMED



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114012
11 Mar 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 1 Dec 18
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/013 of 22 Oct 18
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment at sea including safety.
2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety
- b. religious importance of the request
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. how other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

6. I find that disapproving your wear of a beard is the least restrictive means available to meet the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment at sea including safety. As documented by reference (c), even one day of facial hair growth inhibits the ability to obtain a good seal on a gas mask or respirator. This degrades your ability to participate in damage control procedures, and is a safety risk to you and the rest of the crew. Your request to grow a beard is disapproved.

7. If you subsequently experience a change in physical, operational or geographical environment you may again request for religious accommodation.


R. F. BURKE

Copy to:
OPNAV (N097, N131)
COMCARSTRKGRU THREE



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114011
11 Mar 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR AND UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 2 Jan 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/013 of 22 Oct 18
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a 1/4 inch beard and religious head covering are partially approved. I am approving your wear of a 1/4 inch beard and kippah in line with reference (a), but you are required to shave your beard and remove your kippah and to don personal protective equipment (PPE) or as required in line with reference (g).
2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion, and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR AND UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety
- b. religious importance of the request
- c. means cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there are alternatives available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. how other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed the documents in reference (b), including the endorsement by your commanding officer, and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. As permitted by reference (d) and understanding the nature of your duties at (b) (6), I further find that limiting your wear of a beard to shore and in port only is the least restrictive means available to meet the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment including safety. You may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in reference (g) during your current duties on shore or while onboard a naval vessel in port. That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. However, some of your training duties will occur in an underway operational environment where your accommodation cannot be supported. While underway, damage control is the responsibility of all Navy personnel onboard. In line with reference (c), even one day's growth can be detrimental to a proper face seal and significantly increase risk to an individual. For your safety and the safety of the crew, when you are assigned duties onboard a naval vessel underway, you must conform to normal grooming standards and must temporarily shave your beard. Additionally, at any time and with a similarly compelling government interest, your commanding officer may direct that you temporarily shave your beard.

b. Granting your request to wear a religious head covering in all Navy uniforms is the least restrictive means to support your request. You may wear your kippah as requested, but you are required to remove it to don PPE or as required in line with reference (g).

6. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.


R. P. BURKE

Copy to:
OPNAV (N097, N131)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114016
20 Mar 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR AND UNIFORM STANDARDS
FOR HEAD COVERING

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr 1730 of 29 Jan 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/013 of 22 Oct 18
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard and religious head covering are partially approved. I am approving your wear of a 1/4 inch beard and kippah in line with reference (a) while your LCS crew is off-hull. When your LCS crew is on-hull you are required to shave your beard and remove your kippah to don personal protective equipment (PPE) or as required in line with reference (g).

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion, and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR AND UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety.
- b. religious importance of the request.
- c. means cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests.
- d. whether there are alternatives available to meet the requested accommodation.
- e. how other such requests have been treated.

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed the documents in reference (b), including the endorsement by your commanding officer and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. As permitted by reference (d) and understanding the nature of your duties at USS (b) (6) I further find that limiting your wear of a beard off-hull is the least restrictive means available to meet the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment including safety. You may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in reference (g) during your current duties off-hull. That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. However, some of your duties will occur on-hull in an underway operational environment where your accommodation cannot be supported. Damage control is the responsibility of all Navy personnel onboard. In line with reference (c), even one day's growth can be detrimental to a proper face seal and significantly increase risk to an individual. For your safety and the safety of the crew, when you are assigned duties on-hull, you must conform to normal grooming standards and must temporarily shave your beard. Additionally, at any time and with a similarly compelling government interest, your commanding officer may direct that you temporarily shave your beard.

b. Granting your request to wear a religious head covering in all Navy uniforms and on-hull and off-hull is the least restrictive means to support your request. You may wear your kippah as requested, but required to remove it to don PPE or as required in line with reference (g).

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR AND UNIFORM STANDARDS
FOR HEAD COVERING

6. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.



R. P. BURKE

Copy to:
OPNAV (N097, N131)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114034
22 May 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 1 Mar 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/013 of 22 Oct 18
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment at sea including safety.
2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion, and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety
- b. religious importance of the request
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there are alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. how other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. In homeport or underway, damage control (DC) is the responsibility of each crew member. Although you are not currently assigned to a general quarters watch station that requires the use of DC equipment, your participation in shipboard DC efforts are still foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable.

b. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. If you subsequently experience a change in physical, operational or geographical environment, you may again request for religious accommodation.


R. P. BURKE

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Copy to:

OPNAV (N097, N131)

(b) (6)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114037
3 Jun 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, Recruit Training Command
Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 155651
(b) (b) (6), CHC, USN memo of 5 Mar 19
(c) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(d) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(e) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(f) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(g) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(h) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (f), your request for religious accommodation through waiver of uniform standards to wear a kippah during meals at Recruit Training Command (RTC) is partially approved. I am also approving your request of religious head covering with the following limitations: your head covering at RTC may only be worn during religious ceremonies, and full-time wear to include during meals will be authorized following the Sailor capping ceremony while assigned to RTC.
2. In line with references (c) and (f), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (g), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (d) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (h) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (c) and (d), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:
 - a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety
 - b. religious importance of the request
 - c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
 - d. whether there are alternatives available to meet the requested accommodation
 - e. how other such requests have been treated

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. As outlined above, the Navy has compelling interests in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, as well as health and safety at the individual and unit levels. The compelling interest in unit cohesion is of paramount importance during service accession and indoctrination training, which are unique to the military. In a relatively short 8-week period, RTC transforms civilians from all different backgrounds into Sailors in the United States Navy. To accomplish this, each day consists of structured and intense training. Uniformity of appearance is commensurate with the military principles of service above self, of the military unit above the individual and the importance of teamwork. For many, the vigilant focus on even the smallest details begins with their uniforms and gives them an indication of exacting standards that will be expected of them because they choose to don the uniform of a United States Navy Sailor. Team and cohesion are cultivated through, among other things, uniformity of appearance. Ensuring strict adherence to rules and regulations is also necessary to develop the good order and discipline demanded of every Sailor. In this unique training environment, any deviation from uniformity of appearance, even for a religious purpose, will elevate the individual above the service, the unit, and the team and have a contrary effect to that which RTC training seeks to instill in all.

a. Granting your request to wear a kippah at RTC during religious ceremonies as well as full-time wear after the Sailor capping ceremony to include during meals is the least restrictive means available to support your request. You may wear a kippah in line with reference (a) chapter 6, section 4, article 6405 during your follow-on training pipeline, provided you continue progressing through training and are assigned there. Upon a change in mission, duty, or work environment, and with a compelling government interest, your commanding officer may request that you temporarily remove your kippah to don personal protective equipment in line with reference (f).

b. In making this decision, I reviewed the documents in reference (b), including the endorsement by Commanding Officer, Navy Recruit Training Command. I acknowledge and concur with your requests and the commanding officer's approval for Kosher meal options, wheat-free meal options during Passover and daily prayers in a separate space.

6. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.

7. Approved religious accommodations will remain in effect in line with reference (f) or until a compelling government interest requires suspension or withdrawal of the religious accommodation.



JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N097)
NETC
NSTC
RTC



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114036
June 3, 2019

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6)
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)
Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING AND SWIMWEAR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 22 Mar 19
(c) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(d) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(e) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(f) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(g) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(h) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (f), your request for religious accommodation through waiver of uniform standards to wear a hijab and full-coverage swimsuit at Recruit Training Command (RTC) is partially approved. I am approving your request for a full-coverage swimsuit at RTC. I am also approving your request of religious head covering with the following limitations: your head covering at RTC may only be worn during religious ceremonies, and full-time wear will be authorized following the Sailor capping ceremony while assigned to RTC.

2. In line with references (c) and (f), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (g), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (d) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion, and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (h) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (c) and (d), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety
- b. religious importance of the request
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there are alternatives available to meet the requested accommodation

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING AND SWIMWEAR

e. how other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. As outlined above, the Navy has compelling interests in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, as well as health and safety at the individual and unit levels. The compelling interest in unit cohesion is of paramount importance during service accession and indoctrination training, which are unique to the military. In a relatively short 8-week period, RTC transforms civilians from all different backgrounds into Sailors in the United States Navy. To accomplish this, each day consists of structured and intense training. Uniformity of appearance is commensurate with the military principles of service above self, of the military unit above the individual and the importance of teamwork. For many, the vigilant focus on even the smallest details begins with their uniforms and gives them an indication of exacting standards that will be expected of them because they choose to don the uniform of a United States Navy Sailor. Team and cohesion are cultivated through among other things, uniformity of appearance. Ensuring strict adherence to rules and regulations is also necessary to develop the good order and discipline demanded of every Sailor. In this unique training environment, any deviation from uniformity of appearance, even for a religious purpose, will elevate the individual above the service, the unit, and the team and have a contrary effect to that which RTC training seeks to instill in all.

a. You may wear a full-coverage swimsuit during swim training evolutions at RTC. To align with uniformity, the swimsuit must be black, neat and conservative in nature. The swimsuit must allow for the ability to perform basic swim functions and flotation in water. If the full-coverage swimsuit provided does not meet uniformity or training requirements, you may be required to wear a standard women's one-piece swimsuit issued by RTC.

b. Granting your request to wear a hijab at RTC during religious ceremonies as well as full-time wear after the Sailor capping ceremony is the least restrictive means available to support your request. You may wear a hijab in line with reference (a) chapter 6, section 4, article 6405 during your follow-on training pipeline, provided you continue progressing through training and are assigned there. Upon a change in mission, duty, or work environment, and with a compelling government interest, your commanding officer may request that you temporarily remove your hijab to don personal protective equipment in line with reference (f).

c. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed the documents in reference (b), including the endorsement by the Commanding Officer, (b) (6).

6. Approved religious accommodations will remain in effect in line with reference (f) or until a compelling government interest requires suspension or withdrawal of the religious accommodation.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N097, N131)
NETC
COMNAVCRUITCOM
COMNAVCRUITREG EAST MILLINGTON TN
NSTC
RTC



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/ 114040
5 Jun 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 23 Apr 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/013 of 22 Oct 18
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment at sea including safety.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety
- b. religious importance of the request
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. how other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. While underway, damage control (DC) is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. If you subsequently experience a change in physical, operational or geographical environment you may again request for religious accommodation.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

The following two (2)
response letters both
pertain to the same
original request.



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114020
April 1, 2019

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6)
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 12 Feb 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser 00/013 of 22 Oct 18
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard beyond 1/4 inch is partially approved. You may wear a beard not to exceed 1/4 inch in length after Officer Development School (ODS) and during future assignments when it does not interfere with duties assigned or the military mission.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion, and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety
- b. religious importance of the request
- c. means cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there are alternatives available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. how other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. As outlined above, the Navy has compelling interests in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety, on both the individual and unit levels. The compelling interest in unit cohesion is of paramount importance during service accession and indoctrination training, which are unique to the military. In a relatively short 5-week period, ODS transforms civilians from all different backgrounds into officers in the United States Navy. In order to accomplish this, each day consists of structured, intense training. Uniformity of appearance is commensurate with the military principles of service above self, of the military unit above the individual and the importance of teamwork. For many, the vigilant focus on even the smallest details begins with their uniforms and gives them an indication of exacting standards that will be expected of them because they choose to don the uniform of a United States naval officer. Teamwork and cohesion are cultivated through uniformity of appearance. Ensuring strict adherence to rules and regulations is also necessary to develop the good order and discipline demanded of every naval officer. In this unique training environment, any deviation from uniformity of appearance, even for a religious purpose, will elevate the individual above the service, the unit, and the team and have the negative effect of undermining the very principles which ODS training seeks to instill in all students.

a. Upon completion of ODS, you may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in references (a) and (j). That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. The beard must not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured in any style. You will only maintain your beard while performing non-operational duties, including non-operational training. Upon a change of mission, duty, or environment, and with a compelling government interest, your commanding officer may request that you temporarily shave your beard. At that time, you must revert to the standard set forth in Article 220I.2 of references (a) and (g).

b. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed the documents in reference (b), including the endorsement by Commanding Officer, Navy Recruiting District San Diego and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c). Uniformity, whether in application of standard operating procedures for

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

grooming standards, is essential to good order, discipline and esprit de corps, which are necessary pre-conditions to mission accomplishment. For the same reasons, there is a need for standards and uniformity among the accommodations for religious beards. Article 2201.2 of reference (a) and reference (g) articulate these standards.

c. Authorizing you to wear a 1/4 inch beard during future assignments, mission permitting, is the least restrictive means available to meet the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. Approved religious accommodations will remain in effect in line with reference (g) until a compelling government interest requires suspension or withdrawal of the religious accommodation.



R. P. BURKE

Copt to:
OPNAV (N097, N131)
NETC
COMNAVCRUITCOM
COMNAVCRUITREG WEST MILLINGTON TN
NSTC
OTC



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
N00
17 Jun 19

From: Chief of Naval Operations

To: (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION IN THE CASE OF

(b) (6)

Ref: (a) DCNO (N1) ltr 1730 Ser N1/114020 of 1 Apr 19
(b) (b) (6) ltr of 23 May 19
(c) (b) (6) ltr of 12 Feb 19
(d) DoD Instruction 1300.17
(e) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) DoD Instruction 1332.45
(i) OPNAVINST 1300.20
(j) OPNAVINST 5100.19F
(k) COMNAVSAFECEN ltr 5100 Ser /013 of 22 Oct 18

1. Your appeal of reference (a), as stated by in references (b) and (c), is partially granted. I considered your original request, your appeal, and the endorsements of your correspondence. References (d) through (g) designate me as the final appeal authority for religious accommodation requests.
2. As permitted by references (e) and (g), your request for a full, uncut beard during your Officer Development School (ODS) accession training is granted. Per references (d) through (g), however, this determination is subject to review, suspension or revocation, in whole or in part, at any time based upon a change in duty or circumstances, and the Navy reserve the right to reassess your religious accommodation based upon your subsequent reassignment.
3. As I understand your request, you desire to join the Navy and not remove or shave your beard in any manner. I cannot approve your request for a permanent, uncut beard for the duration of your service in the Navy. The Navy selects chaplains based on their ability to provide religious services in potentially austere and hazardous environments, including at sea assignment. Further, service in the Navy presents challenges and hazards different from the rest of society and at times may require you to place your ship and your shipmates ahead of yourself. As Service Chief, I am responsible for the readiness and safety of all Sailors, references (h) through (k), and this obligation requires me to grant your request subject to a change in duty assignment.

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION IN THE CASE OF

(b) (6)

4. The Navy welcomes people of all faiths and no faith to join our ranks in patriotic service, and I applaud your desire to serve in the Navy Chaplain Corps. You have my sincere best wishes for your success as you decide whether to accept a commission as a U.S. Navy Chaplain.



J. M. RICHARDSON

Copy to:
ASN (M&RA)
DCNO (NI)
OPNAV (N097)
OTC Newport

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114054
22 Jul 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 13 Feb 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard, is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment at sea including safety.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

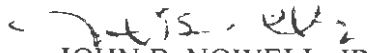
- b. religious importance of the request
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. how other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. While underway, damage control (DC) is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. If you subsequently experience a change in physical, operational or geographical environment you may again request for religious accommodation.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114052
22 Jul 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 14 Mar 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard, is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment at sea including safety.
2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:
 - a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- b. religious importance of the request
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. how other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. While underway, damage control (DC) is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. If you subsequently experience a change in physical, operational or geographical environment you may again request for religious accommodation.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114056
23 Jul 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 23 Apr 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard, is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment at sea including safety.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- b. religious importance of the request
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. how other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. While underway, damage control (DC) is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. If you subsequently experience a change in physical, operational or geographical environment you may again request for religious accommodation.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114065
23 Aug 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 28 Feb 19
(c) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(d) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(e) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(f) BUPERSINST 1730.11 CH-1
(g) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(h) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (f), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard beyond 1/4 inch in length is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment and operational safety.
2. In line with references (c) through (f), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (g), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (d) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion, and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (h) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (c) and (d), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety
- b. religious importance of the request
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. how other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.

6. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command and the Force Chaplain for Naval Special Warfare Command. I find that disapproving your wear of a beard is the least restrictive means available to meet the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment including safety. Your duty position requires you to be prepared to execute world-wide missions with little to no notice. Operational security is of paramount importance to mission accomplishment. In many instances, the success of their missions depend upon the ability of Soldiers and Sailors to accomplish their objectives without garnering undue attention. Any increase in your profile to include facial hair could present an unacceptable risk to yourself and your teammates.

7. If you subsequently experience a change in physical, operational or geographical environment you may again request for religious accommodation.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N097, NI31)
NSWC

The following two (2)
response letters both
pertain to the same
original request.



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

(b) (6)

1730
Ser N00/79
26 Mar 19

From: Commanding Officer (b) (6)

To: (b) (6), USN

Subj: APPROVAL RECOMMENDATION ICO (b) (6), USN

Ref: (a) DoD Instruction 1300.17
(b) SECNAVINST 1730.8
(c) Article 2201.2
(d) BUPERSINST 1730.11

Encl: (1) (b) (6) request of 5 Mar 19
(2) Interview Checklist
(3) Chaplain Memorandum

1. Per references (a) through (d), you are hereby authorized to maintain facial hair in accordance with the following standards:

- a. Your facial hair may not exceed 1/4 of an inch in length.
- b. Your facial hair must not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured to any style (pop culture styles, bandholdz, millennial, wolverine, etc).
- c. You may maintain this beard only while performing non-operational duties, including non-operational training while attached to (b) (6).
- d. Upon change in mission, duty, or environment, and/or with a compelling government interest, you may be directed and/or requested to temporarily shave your facial hair. If this occurs, you are required to revert back to normal grooming standards per Article 2201.2 of the Navy Uniform Regulations. In the event of operational duties (i.e., firefighting), you will be directed to remove facial hair and given the opportunity to grow back your facial hair.
- e. This approval is not valid upon transfer to your next command. Upon detaching and transferring to a new command, you shall revert back to normal grooming standards in accordance with reference (c). At your new command you must resubmit the Religious Accommodation Waiver of Grooming Standards request.
- f. While attending training schools/courses, you will notify your immediate chain of command (schoolhouse course leader/instructor, Leading Petty Officer, Leading Chief Petty Officer, Division Officer, and Department Head) that you have been approved to grow facial hair

Enclosure (2)

Subj: APPROVAL RECOMMENDATION ICO (b) (6) USN

and furnish this letter. It is highly recommended you carry this letter on person in the event you are questioned.

2. My point of contact for this matter is (b) (6) who can be reached at commercial phone (b) (6) or via email (b) (6) @navy.mil.

3. This approval will be valid from 29 March 2019 - 4 September 2019.

(b) (6)

Copy to:
N3
Requestor



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114067
28 Aug 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Officer in Charge, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 155651
(b) Your ltr of 12 Jun 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z NOV 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11 CH-1
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard beyond 1/4 inch in length is disapproved. Your current authorization from Commanding Officer, (b) (6) to wear a beard not to exceed 1/4 inch in length remains in effect.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety
- b. religious importance of the request
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. how other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.

a. As permitted by reference (d), I find that this accommodation is the least restrictive means of accommodating your request while maintaining the Navy's overriding interest in mission accomplishment. You may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in reference (a). That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. The beard must not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured in any style. You will only maintain your beard while performing non-operational duties, including non-operational training. Upon a change of mission, duty or environment, and with a compelling government interest, your commanding officer may request that you temporarily shave your beard. At that time, you must revert to the standard set forth in Article 2201.2 of reference (a). Pursuant to references (d), (e) and (g), you must again request approval when you report to a new command.

b. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command and the local chaplain, your current religious accommodation approval by Commanding Officer, (b) (6) and the guidance of Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c). Uniformity, whether in application of standard operating procedures or grooming standards, is essential to good order, discipline and esprit de corps, which are necessary pre-conditions to mission accomplishment. For the same reasons, there is a need for standards and uniformity among the accommodations for religious beards. Article 2201.2 of reference (a) and reference (g) articulate these standards. In line with reference (g), you are authorized to wear a beard not to exceed 1/4 inch in length.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)
(b) (6)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114081
3 Sep 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USAF
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 12 May 19
(c) SECNAV M-1640.1
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11 CH-1
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request for a waiver of requirements in Articles 2201.1 and 2201.2 of reference (a), to allow you to grow long hair and a beard while in confinement at (b) (6), is disapproved. I am disapproving your request to grow long hair and a beard due to the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment, including maintenance of safety and hygiene within a corrections environment.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of its service members, including prisoners. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

- b. religious importance of the request
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. how other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Department of the Navy Corrections Manual in reference (c).

a. With regard to your requests to wear a beard and long hair, in line with reference (c) a prisoner confined to a military correctional facility is subject to the grooming and hygiene standards of that particular military correction facility regardless of the prisoner's service affiliation.

b. The request you submitted on 7 May 2019 to shave your head directly contradicts your 12 May 2019 request to grow your hair long. In his endorsement of your request, (b) (6) Command Chaplain explained that your request to shave your head calls into question the sincerity of your asserted religious beliefs.

c. Authorization for the possession of personal property in a prisoner's cell is governed by reference (c) as opposed to reference (g). Thus, I acknowledge and concur with Commanding Officer (b) (6) approval for the request for possession of Rune stones, a Guide to Divination and a religious pendant. I also acknowledge and concur with the commanding officer's disapproval of a drinking horn and religious ring.

d. To provide for the safety and security of staff and prisoners, (b) (6) must maintain good order and discipline. To maintain good order and discipline, all prisoners must be treated equitably and standards must be enforced. Although deviation from grooming requirements may be appropriate to allow a prisoner to exercise a sincerely held religious belief, (b) (6) mission in maintenance of good order and discipline accomplish a compelling government interest that requires disapproval of your requests. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate these requests.

6. While every prisoner is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, accomplishment of the (b) (6) mission requires reasonable restrictions and adherence to standards. Deviations from standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the (b) (6) mission as a whole.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)
COMNAVPERSCOM (PERS 00, PERS 00D)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114104
25 Oct 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

Ref: (a) Your ltr of 4 Sep 19
(b) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 20 February 2018
(c) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(d) ASN(M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(e) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(f) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(g) NAVPERS 156651 United States Navy Uniform Regulations
(h) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

Encl: (1) Head covering Manner of wear

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (h), your request for religious accommodation through waiver of uniform standards to wear a head covering in Navy uniforms is approved in line with reference (g) chapter 6, section 4, article 6405. You may wear your head covering in line with enclosure (1), or unless reference (g) is changed to reflect a different manner of wear with your uniform. However, you are required to remove your head covering to don appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) or as required in line with reference (e).
2. In line with references (b) through (e), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (f), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (b) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (h) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (b) and (c), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety
- b. religious importance of the request
- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there are alternatives available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. how other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. As outlined above, the Navy has compelling interests in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, as well as health and safety at the individual and unit levels. Uniformity of appearance is commensurate with the military principles of service above self, of the military unit above the individual and the importance of teamwork. For many, the vigilant focus on even the smallest details begins with their uniforms and gives them an indication of exacting standards that will be expected of them because they choose to don the uniform of a United States Navy Sailor. Team and cohesion are cultivated through, among other things, uniformity of appearance. Ensuring strict adherence to rules and regulations is also necessary to develop the good order and discipline demanded of every Sailor.

a. You may wear a head covering in line with reference (g) chapter 6, section 4, article 6405 and enclosure (1). Upon a change in mission, duty, or work environment, and with a compelling government interest, your commanding officer may request that you temporarily remove your head covering to don personal protective equipment in line with reference (e).

b. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed the documents in reference (a), including the endorsements by the Commanding Officer, (b) (6) and Commander, (b) (6).

6. Approved religious accommodations will remain in effect in line with reference (e) or until a compelling government interest requires suspension or withdrawal of the religious accommodation.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N097, N131)
(b) (6)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114105
25 Oct 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

Ref: (a) Your request of 17 Sep 19
(b) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(c) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(d) ASN(M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(e) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(f) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(g) NAVPERS 15665I
(h) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (h), your request for religious accommodation through waiver of uniform standards to wear a hijab in Navy uniforms is approved in line with reference (g) chapter 6, section 4 of article 6405. However, you are required to remove your Hijab to don appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) or as required in line with reference (e).
2. In line with references (b) through (e), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (f), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (b) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (h) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (b) and (c), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

a. Impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety

b. Religious importance of the request

c. Cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests

d. Whether there are alternatives available to meet the requested accommodation

e. How other such requests have been treated

5. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (a), including the endorsements by your commanding officer and local chaplain.

6. Granting your request to wear a religious head covering in all Navy uniforms is the least restrictive means to support your request. You may wear a Hijab as requested, but you are required to remove it to don PPE or as required by reference (e).

7. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how they affect the Navy mission as a whole.



JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N097, N131)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114111
18 Nov 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 155651
(b) Your ltr of 26 Aug 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. In line with references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment at sea including safety.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

- a. impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety
- b. religious importance of the request

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- c. cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. how other such requests have been treated.

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. While underway, damage control (DC) is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. If you subsequently experience a change in physical, operational or geographical environment you may again request for religious accommodation.



JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)

(b) (6)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/ 114123
10 Dec 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 5 Nov 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. In line with references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard, is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment at sea, including safety.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

- a. Impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety
- b. Religious importance of the request

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- c. Cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. Whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. How other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. While underway, damage control (DC) is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. If you subsequently experience a change in physical, operational or geographical environment, you may again request for religious accommodation.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N0975, N131)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114130
23 Dec 19

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 155651
(b) Your ltr 1000(b) (6) of 6 Nov 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. In line with references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard, is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment at sea including safety.
2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:
 - a. Impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety
 - b. Religious importance of the request

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- c. Cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. Whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. How other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. While underway, damage control (DC) is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. If you subsequently experience a change in physical, operational or geographical environment you may again request for religious accommodation.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)
COMCARSTRKGRU THREE



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114000
6 Jan 20

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

Ref: (a) Your request of 7 Oct 19
(b) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(c) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(d) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(e) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(f) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(g) NAVPERS 15665I
(h) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (h), your request for religious accommodation through waiver of uniform standards to wear a hijab in Navy uniforms is approved in line with reference (g) chapter 6, section 4, article 6405. However, you are required to remove your hijab to don appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) or as required in line with reference (e).

2. In line with references (b) through (e), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (f), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (b) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (h) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (b) and (c), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

a. Impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety

b. Religious importance of the request

c. Cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests

d. Whether there are alternatives available to meet the requested accommodation and

e. How other such requests have been treated

5. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (a), including the endorsements by your chain of command and local chaplain.

6. Granting your request to wear a religious head covering in all Navy uniforms is the least restrictive means to support your request. You may wear a hijab as requested, but you are required to remove it to don PPE or as required by reference (e).

7. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how they affect the Navy mission as a whole.



JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)
COMCARAIRWING TWO



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114009
3 Feb 20

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 24 Apr 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. In line with references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard, is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment at sea, including safety.
2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:
 - a. Impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- b. Religious importance of the request
- c. Cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. Whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. How other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center, in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. While underway, damage control (DC) is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports the immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. If you subsequently experience a change in a physical, operational or geographical environment, you may again request for religious accommodation.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)
(b) (6)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114010
3 Feb 20

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

Ref: (a) Your request of 15 Oct 19
(b) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(c) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(d) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(e) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(f) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(g) NAVPERS 15665I
(h) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (h), your request for religious accommodation through waiver of uniform standards to wear a kufi in Navy uniforms is approved in line with reference (g), chapter 6, section 4, article 6405. However, you are required to remove your kufi to don appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) or as required in line with reference (e).

2. In line with references (b) through (e), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (f), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (b) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (h) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (b) and (c), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

a. Impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety

b. Religious importance of the request

c. Cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests

d. Whether there are alternatives available to meet the requested accommodation, and

e. How other such requests have been treated

5. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (a), including the endorsements by your chain of command and local chaplain.

6. Granting your request to wear a religious head covering in all Navy uniforms is the least restrictive means to support your request. You may wear a kufi as requested, but you are required to remove it to don PPE or as required by reference (e).

7. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how they affect the Navy mission as a whole.



JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:

OPNAV (N131, N0975)

(b) (6)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114008
3 Feb 20

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 11 Dec 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. In line with references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard, is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment at sea, including safety.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

a. Impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- b. Religious importance of the request
- c. Cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. Whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. How other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center, in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. While underway, damage control (DC) is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. If you subsequently experience a change in a physical, operational or geographical environment, you may again request for religious accommodation.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114015
14 Feb 20

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR AND UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 8 Nov 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard and religious head covering is partially approved. I am approving your wear of a ¼-inch beard and taqiyah in line with reference (a), but you are required to shave your beard while underway at sea and remove your taqiyah to don personal protective equipment (PPE) as required.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

- a. Impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety
- b. Religious importance of the request

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR AND UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING


- c. Cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. Whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. How other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. As permitted by reference (d) and understanding the nature of your duties at Fleet Weather Center Norfolk, I find that limiting your wear of a beard to shore and in port only is the least restrictive means available to meet the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment including safety. You may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in reference (g) during your duties on shore or while onboard a naval vessel in port. That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. However, some of your duties will occur in an underway operational environment where your accommodation cannot be supported. While underway, damage control (DC) is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable.

b. Granting your request to wear a religious head covering in all Navy uniforms is the least restrictive means to support your request. You may wear your taqiyah as requested, but you are required to remove it to don PPE or as required in line with reference (g).

6. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.



JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)

(b) (6)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114019
27 Feb 20

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR AND UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR
HEAD COVERING

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 18 Feb 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a ¼-inch beard and religious head covering is partially approved. I am approving your wear of a yarmulke in line with reference (a), but you are required to remove your yarmulke to don personal protective equipment (PPE) or as required in line with reference (g). I am disapproving your wear of a ¼-inch beard due to the Navy's compelling government interest in mission accomplishment at sea, including safety.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR AND UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR HEAD COVERING

- a. Impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety
- b. Religious importance of the request
- c. Cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. Whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. How other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. While underway, damage control (DC) is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. Granting your request to wear a religious head covering in all Navy uniforms is the least restrictive means to support your request. You may wear your yarmulke as requested, but you are required to remove it to don PPE or as required in line with reference (g).

6. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)
(b) (6)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114020
27 Feb 20

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 155651
(b) Your ltr of 28 Jan 20
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. In line with references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard, is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling Government interest in mission accomplishment at sea including safety.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

- a. Impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety
- b. Religious importance of the request

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- c. Cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. Whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. How other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. While underway, damage control (DC) is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. If you subsequently experience a change in physical, operational or geographical environment you may again request for religious accommodation.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)
COMCARSTRIKGRU TEN



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114025
28 Feb 20

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 155651
(b) Your ltr 1730 of 3 Dec 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. In line with references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard, is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling Government interest in mission accomplishment at sea including safety.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

- a. Impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety
- b. Religious importance of the request

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- c. Cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. Whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. How other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. Damage control (DC), both inport and underway, is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. If you subsequently experience a change in physical, operational or geographical environment you may again request for religious accommodation.



JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (NI31, N0975)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/ 114022
28 Feb 20

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 155651
(b) Your ltr of 17 Dec 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. In line with references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard, is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling Government interest in mission accomplishment at sea including safety.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

- a. Impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety
- b. Religious importance of the request

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- c. Cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. Whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. How other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. Damage control (DC), both inport and underway, is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. If you subsequently experience a change in physical, operational or geographical environment you may again request for religious accommodation.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114031
12 Mar 20

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr 1730 of 27 Dec 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. Pursuant to references (a) through (g), your request to waive the requirements in article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard is partially approved. You may wear a beard not to exceed 1/4 inch in length.

2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.

3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.

4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- a. Impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety
- b. Religious importance of the request
- c. Cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. Whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. How other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

6. You may wear a beard consistent with the standards set forth in reference (g). That is, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. The beard must not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured to any style. You will only maintain your beard while performing non-operational duties, including non-operational training. Upon a change in mission, duty or environment, and with a compelling government interest, your commanding officer may request that you temporarily shave your beard. At that time, you must revert to the standard set forth in article 2201.2 of reference (a).

7. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR.

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)
NETC
CNATT



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

1730
Ser N1/114044
4 Apr 20

From: Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)
To: (b) (6), USN
Via: Commanding Officer, USS (b) (6)

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

Ref: (a) NAVPERS 15565I
(b) Your ltr of 6 Dec 19
(c) COMNAVSAFECEN NORFOLK VA 261941Z Nov 18 (ALSAFE 18/008)
(d) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(e) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(f) ASN (M&RA) memo of 6 Jun 13
(g) BUPERSINST 1730.11A
(h) 42 U.S.C. §2000bb-1
(i) United States Attorney General memo of 6 Oct 17

1. In line with references (a) through (h), your request to waive the requirements in Article 2201.2 of reference (a) for a beard, is disapproved. I am disapproving your wear of a beard due to the Navy's compelling Government interest in mission accomplishment at sea including safety.
2. In line with references (d) through (g), I am designated as the approval authority for requests for religious accommodation.
3. Reference (h), the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), states that the Government may substantially burden an individual's exercise of religion only if it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person is: (1) in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and (2) is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. Reference (e) incorporates RFRA and notes that the Government has a compelling interest in mission accomplishment, to include military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline and health and safety, on both individual and unit levels. Additionally, unless it will have an adverse impact on mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion and good order and discipline, the Navy will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs of Sailors. Reference (i) emphasizes that only those interests of the highest order can overbalance legitimate claims to the free exercise of religion.
4. All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. In line with references (d) and (e), determination of a request for religious accommodation requires consideration of the following factors:

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR

- a. Impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, and health and safety
- b. Religious importance of the request
- c. Cumulative impact of repeatedly granting similar requests
- d. Whether there is alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation
- e. How other such requests have been treated

5. The Navy is a specialized community governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society. While every Sailor is welcome to express a religion of choice or none at all, our greater mission sometimes requires reasonable restrictions. Deviations from Navy standards must be considered against how those deviations impact the Navy mission as a whole. In making this decision, I reviewed reference (b), including the endorsements by your chain of command, the local chaplain and the guidance of the Commander, Naval Safety Center in reference (c).

a. With regard to your request to wear a beard, reference (c) reported that a beard reduces safe and effective wear and operation of protective equipment, to include gas masks, self-contained breathing apparatus face masks and respirators. Damage control (DC), both in port and underway, is the responsibility of each crew member. Your participation in shipboard DC efforts are routine and foreseeable regardless of whether the ship is in port or at sea. Beards present a hazard to these efforts, as outlined above, and this hazard can extend to other personnel should they be required to come to your aid if you are injured during DC activities. Though the probability of a negative consequence from an ineffective seal is relatively low, the severity of that consequence may be high – to include injury. From an operational risk management perspective, this risk is untenable. If assigned to a shore command, you may once again submit a request for religious accommodation.

b. I find that granting your request would present an unacceptable risk to the Navy's compelling interest in mission accomplishment, including good order and discipline, military readiness and safety on both the individual and unit levels. We must create an environment where everyone is treated the same and an environment that supports immediate and unquestioned response to command authority. I further find that there are no less restrictive means available to accommodate your request.

6. If you subsequently experience a change in physical, operational or geographical environment you may again request for religious accommodation.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

Copy to:
OPNAV (N131, N0975)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

RECRUIT TRAINING COMMAND

3355 ILLINOIS STREET
GREAT LAKES, IL 60088-3127

IN REPLY REFER TO

5800

Ser LGL/L7750

15 Nov 18

From: Commanding Officer, Recruit Training Command

To: (b) (6), USN

Subj: REQUEST FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION THROUGH WAIVER OF
GROOMING STANDARDS FOR FACIAL HAIR ICO (b) (6)

Ref: (a) (b) (6), CHC, USN, ltr of 5 Oct 18 w/encls

(b) BUPERSINST 1730.11

(c) BUPERSINST 1000.22B

1. On 5 October 2018, (b) (6) submitted reference (a) on your behalf. This contained a request to grow facial hair in accordance with your religious practice.
2. On 13 November 2018, pursuant to reference (b), I was designated as the approval authority for beards of less than 1/4 inch in length.
3. Following the capping ceremony after Battle Stations, while you are attached to Recruit Training Command, you may maintain facial hair not to exceed 1/4 inch in length. The beard must not become unkempt in appearance and will not be manicured to any style. The beard must be consistent with the standards set forth in reference (c). You are advised that this approval only applies to your time at this duty station and does not apply to your next duty station.
4. Congratulations on becoming a Sailor!

E.M. THORS



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

(b) (6)

1730

Ser (b) (6) /666

5 Dec 18

From: Commanding Officer, Naval Nuclear Power Training Command

To: (b) (6), USN

Subj: APPROVAL OF RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION ICO (b) (6)

Encl: (3) Sailor request of 20 Nov 18

(4) Chaplain Memorandum and interview checklist

(5) Warning advisement about statements made during a religious accommodation interview

1. Per references (a) through (d), I am approving your religious accommodation request.
2. Per reference (c), your beard must be kept $\frac{1}{4}$ inch or less and will not interfere/impair with any portion of your mission at NNPTC.
3. My point of contact is (b) (6) who can be reached at (b) (6)@navy.mil or (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Copy to:
OPNAV N131



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

(b) (6)

1730

Ser (b) (6) /711

19 Dec 18

From: Commanding Officer, (b) (6)

To: (b) (6), USN

Subj: APPROVAL OF RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION ICO (b) (6)

Encl: (3) Sailor request of 11 Dec 18

(4) Chaplain Memorandum and interview checklist

(5) Warning advisement about statements made during a religious accommodation interview

1. Per references (a) through (d), I am approving your religious accommodation request.
2. Per reference (c), your beard must be kept 1/4 inch or less and will not interfere/impair with any portion of your mission at (b) (6).
3. My point of contact is (b) (6) who can be reached at (b) (6) @navy.mil or (b) (6).

(b) (6)

Copy to:
OPNAV N131

1730
Ser N6/0117
5 Feb 19

MEMORANDUM

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6), USN

Subj: APPROVAL OF RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS ICO (b) (6)
(b) (6)

Ref: (a) DoD Instruction 1300.17 of 10 February 2009
(b) SECNAVINST 1730.8
(c) BUPERSINST 1730.11

Encl: (1) (b) (6) request of 2 Jan 19
(2) Chaplain Memorandum and Interview Checklist

1. Per reference (a) through (c), I am approving your religious accommodation request.
2. Per reference (c), your beard must be kept ¼ inch or less and will not interfere/impair with any portion of your mission at (b) (6).
3. The point of contact for this matter is (b) (6) who can be reached at (b) (6)@navy.mil or (b) (6).

(b) (6)

Copy to:
OPNAV N131
(b) (6)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

(b) (6)

1730
N00
8 Mar 19

From: Commander, (b) (6)

To: (b) (6), USN

Subj: APPROVAL RECOMMENDATION ICO (b) (6), USN
RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

Ref: (a) DoD Instruction 1300.17
(b) SECNAVINST 1730.8
(c) BUPERSINST 1730.11

Encl: (1) (b) (6), USN ltr of 21 Feb 19
(2) (b) (6), USN ltr of 21 Feb 19

1. Per references (a) through (c), I am approving this request in full.
2. My point of contact for this matter is (b) (6) who can be reached at Comm: (b) (6) or via Email: (b) (6)@navy.mil.
3. This approval will be mailed to OPNAV N131.

(b) (6)



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
RECRUIT TRAINING COMMAND
3355 ILLINOIS STREET
GREAT LAKES, IL 60088-3127

IN REPLY REFER TO
1730
Ser LGL/E1832
21 Mar 19

From: Commanding Officer, Recruit Training Command
To: (b) (6), USN

Subj: ACCOMMODATION OF PRACTICE BASED ON RELIGIOUS BELIEF

Ref: (a) (b) (6), CHC, USN ltr dtd 5 Mar 19 w/encls
(b) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(c) BUPERSINST 1730.11

1. I have received and reviewed reference (a), which memorializes your requests for accommodation of practice based on religious belief. Specifically, you are requesting that (1) Kosher meal options be made available at Recruit Training Command (RTC) (2) that non-wheat options be made available during meals for the period of Passover (19-27 APR) (3) that you be permitted to wear a Kippah during meals and (4) that you be permitted to say prayers in a separate space in the mornings. Pursuant to references (b) and (c), I am the approval authority for requests of this kind.

2. After careful consideration of your request and the requirements set forth in references (b) and (c) I have determined that, due to the nature and demands of recruit training, only a portion of your requests can be granted at this time:

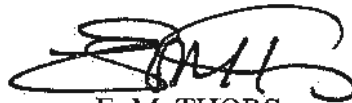
a. Kosher Meal Options. With regards to your request that Kosher meal options be made available at Recruit Training Command, unfortunately this accommodation cannot be made. The galley follows a 21-day meal cycle, which is planned to provide a balanced and nutritious diet over time. Changing the menu would require the restructuring of this cycle, as well as the introduction of entirely new meal items which would require changes to the galley budget. Unfortunately, it won't be possible to implement these changes prior to your anticipated graduation.

b. Non-Wheat Options during Passover. This request is granted. The galley offers a wide variety of non-wheat options that you are free to choose from during your scheduled meals during the period of Passover. Additionally, RTC Jewish Lay volunteers will be hosting a Passover Seder meal on 19 April in the RTC Recruit Memorial Chapel that you are free to attend.

c. Kippah During Meals. The profound significance of uniformity within a military setting is a fundamental concept underlying the training you receive at Recruit Training Command. In keeping with this concept, the process of becoming a Sailor requires, amongst other things, strict adherence to the uniform regulations. As such, while undergoing training within the unique training environment of RTC you may not wear a Kippah during meals.

d, Prayers in the Morning. This request is granted. You are permitted to leave your rack up to 40 minutes before reveille in order to pray in a separate space as you requested. It is expected that this time will be used solely for the purposes of praying in accordance with your request. To the extent that this time is not being used for prayer, this authorization to leave your rack 40 minutes early will be reconsidered.

3. The Chaplains and your chain of command are available to support you in the event you have any questions or concerns about your options regarding this request. Please do not hesitate to seek help should you need it.



E. M. THORS

Copy to:
File



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

(b) (6)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

1730
Ser 08B-MP/047
1 May 19

From: Commander, (b) (6)
[Redacted]
To: (b) (6), USN
Subj: APPROVAL OF RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION REQUEST ICO (b) (6)
[Redacted], USN
Ref: (a) DoD Instruction 1300.17
(b) SECNAVINST 1730.8B
(c) BUPERSINST 1730.11
(d) (b) (6) Dress Code Policy of 13 Mar 17
Encl: (1) (b) (6) request of 10 Apr 19
(2) (b) (6) undated ltr, rcvd 24 Apr 19
(3) Chaplain Interview Checklist

1. Per references (a) through (c), I approve your request in enclosure (1) to wear a beard one-quarter (1/4) inch or less in length. The scope of this approval is limited to your present assignment at a non-operational shore command. As acknowledged in enclosure (1), this approval may be modified, suspended, or revoked in the event you are permanently or temporarily assigned duties in an operational or training environment.

2. In addition to enclosures (1) through (3), I considered the following information:

a. The importance of the military policy, practice, or duty from which religious accommodation is sought in terms of mission accomplishment, including:

(1) Military readiness: Your duties as an engineer primarily involve working in an office environment at Naval Reactors Headquarters. I have determined that wearing a beard one-quarter inch or less in length will have no measurable adverse impact to military readiness or mission accomplishment.

(2) Unit cohesion: Naval Reactors is composed of active duty Navy personnel and civilian personnel from the Departments of the Navy and Energy. All personnel, including military members, assigned to Naval Reactors are authorized to wear appropriate civilian attire per reference (d). While wearing a beard could differentiate a military member from others in the unit, the potential impact from such differentiation is mitigated by military and civilian personnel primarily wearing civilian attire in the working environment.

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Subj: APPROVAL OF RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION REQUEST ICO [REDACTED]
(b) (6), USN

(3) Good order and discipline: The Navy uniform and grooming standards ensure a professional appearance that reflects positively on the individual and the service. While wearing a beard is a departure from these standards and could detract from good order and discipline in the unit, reasonable accommodations are regularly made for genuine religious beliefs and documented medical conditions. I find that any potential impact to good order and discipline will not adversely impact the unit's mission accomplishment.

(4) Health and safety: Facial hair can prevent a tight face seal on respirator and other personal protective equipment (PPE) that requires contact with the face. Your present duties do not require you to wear PPE. Therefore, I do not find this accommodation to cause an adverse impact to health and safety. As discussed in paragraph (1), this approval may be modified, suspended, or revoked if you are permanently or temporarily assigned duties in an operational or training environment where effective employment of PPE is required.

b. The religious importance of the accommodation to you as documented in enclosures (1) through (3).

c. I do not provide any finding or opinion on the cumulative impact of additional requests for accommodations of religious practices of a similar nature.

d. Enclosure (2) states that your request to wear a beard one-quarter inch or less in length was an alternative to requesting to wear a longer beard. Because I am approving your request, I did not consider alternate means to accommodate the religious practice.

3. I did not identify any other pertinent issues or information associated with this request.

4. My point of contact is (b) (6), Judge Advocate General's Corps, U.S. Navy, who can be reached at (b) (6) @navy.mil and (b) (6).

5. A copy of this approval will be forwarded to OPNAV N131. Per reference (c), I am taking final action on the request within 15 days of receipt of enclosures (1) through (3).

(b) (6)

Copy to:
OPNAV N131
NAVSEA 08B, 08S